

Dear Co-Chairs Cohen and Gresko, Vice-Chairs Slap and Palm, Ranking Members Miner and Harding, and members of the Environment Committee,

On behalf of NEMBA located in Connecticut, I write to ask you to support Raised House Bill 5291, An Act Authorizing Bonding for Bikeways, Greenways, and Recreational Trails.

This important bill would increase the bond authorization for the Recreational Trails and Greenways Grants program to \$6 million. In Fall 2021 DEEP issued a request for recreational trails proposals with only \$3 million available. It received 65 applications requesting over \$22 million, of which the highly ranked proposals alone totaled over \$7 million. Although \$3 million was granted to twenty worthy projects, we expect the ongoing need for investments in Connecticut's outdoor recreation infrastructure to continue.

I believe trails are a safer option for folks to get into the outdoors. They are great for beginner riders and those starting their fitness journey. You can't forget about all the families that utilize the trail systems. As the founder of a women's cycling group I would love more options for group rides to get adult women into cycling. As a NEMBA member we take pride in our trail systems and are always looking for somewhere new to ride.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this matter.

Sincerely,

Hunter Ralston  
NEMBA Member  
Women on Wheels Founder